

METHOD OF IDENTIFYING IMMUNOSUPPRESSIVE AGENTS

ABSTRACT

A method for identifying therapeutically effective immunosuppressive agents by screening such agents for those which induce apoptosis in activated T cells is disclosed. T cells were isolated then activated and treated with various test compounds. A caspase substrate is added to detect caspase activation and apoptosis in the cells. Compounds which stimulate caspase activation and apoptosis are also tested against resting T cells to determine those agents which are more effective in activated T cells compared to resting T cells. Compounds with this selectivity are effective in treating immunopathological disorders such as arthritis, graft rejection, graft versus host disease, inflammatory bowel syndrome and the like.

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